

450,  
THE  
CONFEDERACY OF KINGS  
AGAINST  
THE FREEDOM OF THE WORLD;

BEING  
Free thoughts upon the present state of French  
Politics;  
A vindication of the National Assembly in suspending  
Louis XVI.  
CONJECTURES ON THE MOVEMENT OF THE CON-  
FEDERATE ARMIES;  
And their influence in reinstating the King, and estab-  
lishing a Constitution by force.

IN THREE LETTERS  
ADDRESSED TO THE  
RIGHT HON. EDMUND BURKE.

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The State that strives for liberty, though foil'd  
And forc'd t' abandon what she bravely fought,  
Deserves at least applause for her attempt,  
And pity for her loss. But that's a cause  
Not often unsuccessful; power usurp'd  
Is weakness when oppos'd; conscious of wrong,  
'Tis pusillanimous and prone to flight,  
But slaves that once conceive the glowing thought  
Of freedom, in that hope itself possess  
All that the contest calls for; spirit, strength,  
The scorn of danger and united hearts,  
The surest presage of the good they seek.

COWPER.

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## ERRATA:

Preface, p. iii. *For* their efforts, *read* the efforts of the French.—p. iv. *For* doctrines which they endeavoured to revive, *read* doctrines which were endeavoured to be revived—p. v. *For* that tends to union *read* and that tends to union.

p. 29. *For* the human trophies, *read* these human trophies

p. 30. *For* precede, *read* supercede

p. 34. *For* if they really *read* if these really

p. 37. *For* and they think, *read* and think

p. 39. *For* when reason hath excelled, *read* whom reason hath excelled

p. 39. *For* voices should always, *read* power should always

p. 48. *For* caught in their own springs, *read* caught in their own snares.

p. 49. *For* how far it treats, *read* how far it trusts

p. 61. *For* boiling, *read* boil

p. 66. *For* is not to be found, *read* is not to be obtained

p. 66. *For* Vertgem, *read* Vortegern

p. 67. *For* prerogatives, *read* prerogative

p. 67. *For* should we NOT remonstrate, *read* should remonstrate

p. 75. *For* that the abuses, *read* that the abuse,



## P R E F A C E.

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THE following sheets were begun previous to the marching of the confederate armies, and before the reduction of Longwy, when the chasm of French intelligence was filled up with the most exaggerated relations of barbarities too horrid to mention, though not so bad as reported. Prejudice however seemed to colour with an high hand, and party reported for interested purposes, occurrences, which, when simply related, are shocking, but which, when so mercenarily embellished, convinced every unprejudiced mind of their fallacy.

These accounts nevertheless, many of which were paid for as advertisements, had some effect upon the public mind, and though many worthy men, hurried away by their feelings, abandoned the cause, I conceived that something might be said in its favour. Moderate men applauded their efforts in overthrowing



the Bastille, they proceeded with them till the affair of the 10th, but when they suspended and confined their king, they gave them up.

Notwithstanding this; upon taking a survey of the peculiar circumstances of the French nation, I thought this act might at least be justified in the turbulence of the times; upon examining it more closely, I found it stood upon the same ground as the convention which declared the abdication of James and seated William on the throne. Doctrines which they endeavoured to revive in the discussion on the Regency Bill, but doctrines which appear to me inimical to liberty. Upon reflecting still more deeply, I found the National Assembly had acted more wisely, and to the best of my recollection, according to the principles of Mr. LOCKE and some of the first political writers, who asserted that if a constitution is established by the people, consisting of three component parts whose union is essential, should any part fail, should any branch violate their trust--the government

ment is destroyed, and the body of the nation ought to be assembled and consulted upon what form of government they chuse to substitute for that so dissolved. The National Assembly proceeded upon this principle---they declared that the King had violated the constitution and they appeal to a National Convention which will express unequivocally the resolutions of the people—but I have not yet heard that these principles are combated.

With respect to the interference of foreign powers I cannot persuade myself but that it is a dangerous precedent, and those that encourage it should beware lest a confederacy under the specious title of supporting the honour and dignity of crowns—should be converted into a despotic engine to destroy the liberties of Europe. *Divide et impera* is a Machiavelian principle well known in courts—it can only be combated by united hearts, every thing therefore that renders man mild and sociable to man—that tends to union would counteract this dangerous principle

principle and multiply the stock of human happiness—no more would myriads of the human race be sacrificed to the caprice of individuals—the sword would soon be beat into the ploughshare and the spear into the pruning hook, and perhaps we should find that the golden age was not a mere poetical fiction.

With respect to the success of the confederate armies—I think it impossible that they should be victorious without an insurrection in their favour, on this all their hopes depend—twenty-six millions of people are not easily run down by one hundred thousand—besides that enthusiasm which they have so fatally manifested; the dread of punishment, the sanguinary manifesto of the DUKE of BRUNSWICK; nay their ardour for liberty carried to such a melancholy degree of licentiousness; the alteration of property; all will tend to make them desperate, and I hope their victory will not be marked with sanguinary trophies.

From a general view of the circumstances of the French people, from being  
impressed



impressed with the success of other nations struggling in the same glorious cause, I conceived some general hints might be thrown out ; I proceed only upon general principles ; but had I had an hour's conversation with an intelligent friend thoroughly conversant in European politics, I should, assisted with his information and remarks, have entered more into particulars ; having neglected that opportunity, I confine myself to generals ; nay, so little have I consulted newspaper information, that I have not even read the vindication of the act of the Assembly by M. CONDORCET—I have only read the manifesto of the Princes which requires no answer.

There are some inconveniencies attending this my *entree* in the political world, at a period most inauspicious, with opinions most unpopular—this does not move me, nor will the censure of the critical tribunal induce me to change my opinion ; who ever combated prejudice without being censured ? Who ever vindicated truth without being abused ? In  
some

some cases the strongest censure is the greatest praise. My expressions may be condemned, but my principles will not be shaken; I shall ever think that the struggle of the French was noble, and though shocking barbarities have stigmatized their conduct, yet these have been occasioned by the perfidy of the court; or by ill timed resistance to the wishes of the nation. I repeat that these excesses have been occasioned by the perfidy of the court and by the invasion of the confederate armies; but these excesses prove how dangerous it is to entrust an individual with power which he may so fatally abuse. I now throw down the pen with the firmest conviction that I shall never be ashamed of having placed my mite as an humble offering upon the Altar of Liberty.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE.

SIR,

AT a moment when the political atmosphere appears so changeable, and the public mind is so much agitated by conjecture, when individuals not only receive intelligence variously refracted through the dense medium of prejudice, but are eager to communicate that intelligence to serve the purpose of party—in such a crisis, at such a period, teeming with great political events now bursting into  
B birth,



birth, unshaken by the torrent of popular opinion, I assume perhaps a feeble but at least an honest pen, not to extenuate but to vindicate that act of the National Assembly, which suspends from his functions Louis XVI. and to endeavour to wipe away some of those aspersions, which ministerial prints in the pay of government, attempt to cast upon the character of the French nation. I am one of those who cannot think that the crimes of the few, should be imputed to the many; nor can I listen to the voice of rumor, till I examine the source from whence it proceeds; and though my ears are on all sides assailed with anathemas against the people of France, I am rather inclined to doubt, from the virulence and intemperance of the language, whether that deliberate and steady judgment, so essential to direct in the formation of political opinions, does at this moment sufficiently pre-

preside: I have frequently thought that  
 something might be said, nay, that more  
 might be hoped in favour of so large a  
 portion of our fellow creatures; and  
 therefore wish to enter impartially into  
 an examination of that conduct which is  
 so generally reprehended.—It is to you,  
 Sir, that I would wish to address my-  
 self; because to your political rhapsody,  
 whose rhetoric has often amused, but  
 whose arguments have never convinced  
 me, I am referred by your adherents for  
 the anticipation of those barbarities which  
 they say you have there predicted; barba-  
 rities which they say they now see verified.  
 —Thus, Sir, your disciples have endowed  
 you with inspiration, and crowned your  
 splendid talents with the gift of prophecy  
 —there, with all the graces of language  
 and the precision of truth, you have  
 depicted, they say, those horrors and  
 dissensions which are taking place, and

you are now dignified with the epithets of a sound politician, and a true prophet ; there are, Sir, notwithstanding, who think your politics are not sound, and that interest forms the barometer of your political opinions, which are but reeds shaken in the wind ; there are, I say, who cannot tamely hear the voice of declamation, so paramount to the dictates of common sense, nor coincide with that intemperate exultation at distresses which some people wish should come to pass, merely for the vanity of being esteemed prophets. Permit me now, Sir, to examine the data upon which your predictions were founded :—you saw Reason rolling away the stone from the sepulchre, and Liberty rising from that aristocratic tomb in which she had been so long immured ; you saw her riding triumphantly, with Tyranny and Superstition chained to her chariot wheels ; you saw a great nation which  
had



had long slumbered in slavery, shaking off its fetters by one instantaneous, unanimous, and general effort. Twenty-six millions of slaves suddenly regenerated, and, increasing the intellectual world with twenty-six millions of thinking beings; the ecclesiastics doomed by superstition to imprisonment for life within the walls of a convent, bursting their cearments and revisiting the chearful beams of day, restored to the comforts of social, and the advantages of civil society; you saw a code of laws, which for wisdom, was the envy, the admiration of Europe—a code, which was only censured because it was thought too pure to be reduced to practice; yet your microscopic eye spied out a defect, a radical defect.—France had entrusted her king with too much power, she had permitted him by the improvident exercise of the veto, and by caballing with other courts to render  
 abor-

abortive the wholesome regulations and the laudable efforts of that national convention, from whence alone he derived his authority. France, though she had long groaned under despotism, did not wish to annihilate monarchy; she offered to Louis the most estimable present that human nature could bestow; she made him king of a free people.—He abused the trust; and it was necessary for the nation in its own defence, for its own salvation, to resume a power which had been ungratefully directed against the parent from whom it derived its existence;—you knew, Sir, your experience in human nature had taught you that power, in the hands of an individual is dangerous, because it is in general abused; you knew the weakness of Louis, and you saw him surrounded by those who had sufficient art to gratify their sinister designs, and encourage their king to betray his country. From such premises,

mises, Sir, without being a conjurer, he must have been a very shallow observer, who could not have erected the horoscope of monarchy and predicted its fall. Power was lodged with those who had neither wisdom to direct nor talents to render it respectable. Louis XVI. conceiving his partial interests as an individual, divided from the general interest of his people—more anxious to regain his former exorbitant power, than to act in concert with the nation for their mutual welfare, intriguing with foreign courts, resisting the wishes of his fellow citizens, counteracting every plan of legislation, acting with the most consummate dissimulation, and reducing treachery to a system—had by a long series of plots and intrigues, endeavoured to subvert and render abortive the labours of the constituent assembly; and it was then discovered, as had been long before predicted



dicted by abler politicians than yourself—that the constituent assembly had vested too much *power* in the executive magistrate, who had manifested his perfidy in repeated instances—yet the legislative assembly still hesitated, and deferred to the last hour of act, that measure which all knew must sooner or later be adopted—till the voice of an indignant people dashed this monarchic Phæton from a car which he was unable and unworthy to guide—perhaps this too was a necessary measure to save the political world from despotic conflagration.

But I wish not to insult fallen Majesty ; I can with the most compassionate, pity the situation of the man, whilst with the more just I condemn the conduct of the king.

Yet let me ask you, Sir, if you can consider



sider deliberately the events which have successively taken place—internal commotions fomented by despots—everything at a stand—an army of foreign mercenaries collected upon the Frontiers—communications fully proved between the King and the enemies of the country—the Assembly censured by the people for too much lenity, for a delay which appeared criminal—the nation calling aloud for justice—how, Sir, under such circumstances, when the treachery of the crown *had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished*—what would have been your advice had you been a member of that assembly; I say, Sir, of that representative assembly—supposing that you could have expected neither pension nor peerage, as the reward of your political apostacy, what would have been your opinion, what would you have advised? There are moments, Sir, when

it is necessary to act; there are some when it is better to deliberate; the Assembly combined both—they declared that Louis had violated the constitution, but they declined being judges upon a point so delicate; they think proper to take the sense of the nation, and they agree to call a convention, which shall be unequivocally the representative of the sovereign power of that nation, by giving every individual of a certain age, as was proposed indeed in this country, a right to give his vote at the election; such national convention will undoubtedly represent the concentrated power of the nation, it is the union of their several wills, and the genuine organ which conveys the sense of a people—to form an idea of this, you must abstract all ideas of English representation as it exists in practice, and confine your ideas solely to its essence. Possibly you may admit  
the

the wisdom of such a state of representation, you may acknowledge its perfection but deny its practicability—to you, Sir, who, from once being the defender of liberty, stand forward in this age of your political chivalry the champion of despotism, it may appear impracticable, because you would rather disseminate prejudice, and involve the world in the gloomy horror of political darkness, lest the radiance of liberty should again enlighten regions which have been so long obscured.

With respect to the confinement of the King, I cannot think that the National Assembly has acted improperly; the sanguinary manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick, which the Emperor ashamed of is now endeavouring to soften, sufficiently warranted the National Assembly in depriving Louis of the power of



doing mischief, or from becoming a tool for ambition to effect its purposes. Seated upon the throne, the King of a free people, with an ample, nay, too great a revenue, with sufficient power to do all that might render him the favorite of his people, and only restrained from doing that which would render him the execration of free men—to what purpose did he employ his power? to what use did he apply his revenue?—the one was employed to resume the character so long usurped, the character of a tyrant; was not his revenue devoted to the same purpose—not expended in luxury, not for purchasing alliances with foreign courts; but literally prostituted to the vilest purposes, that gold which was given to enable him to support the crown with dignity, was converted into chains to fetter a nation which had generously furnished



nished him with means of their own destruction:—nay, even the sums allowed were not sufficient; loans were negotiated, future revenues anticipated to accelerate national ruin.—I ask again, Sir, to what purpose were these sums applied? to the support of the emigrant princes;—was the nation thus to suffer their King to proceed and drain them of resources necessary to protect it against the invasions of foreign tyrants?—no, Sir; the people had more spirit: already, like the infant Hercules, they had destroyed the serpents of aristocracy and priestcraft; and now, with bolder arm, they have cleared the Augean stable of monarchy and corruption—they have struck off at one blow that corroding cancer which, if not separated from the national body, must soon have proved its destruction! But I will not, in compassion to fallen majesty,

majesty, attempt to enumerate that black catalogue of crimes which must be soon brought to light, otherwise, were I simply to colour as far as indisputable facts would give me cable, all feeling men would shrink with horror from the portrait;—and however his present misfortunes, which he has brought upon himself, might induce us as men to forget his delinquencies, it ought not to be so with the National assembly. In a great legislative body, neither human prejudices nor human weaknesses ought to have place; there the heart should never mislead the head. I trust, Sir, that the suspension, nay, the confinement of Louis, is a measure that will be justified to posterity in the exigencies of the moment. Every thing concurred to make this act of the Assembly an act of expedience, an act of policy, an act of duty, an act of justice;  
if

if it shall be said that this act was unlawful, from precisely the same premisses I shall infer, that the convention which declared the abdication of James and seated William on the throne, was an unlawful assembly, the same arguments therefore that would be directed against the French Assembly would apply to the English convention, they would prove that James was unlawfully dethroned, and that William was an usurper: let not then his most *Christian Majesty* complain of rigour which he has brought upon himself, though he was King. I trust, Sir, that there are many thinking feeling men in this country, who consider the immolation of *twenty-five millions of men*, too horrible a sacrifice to the convenience of *one*.

I am not therefore alone of opinion, that this act of the Assembly will stand  
against



against the brutum fulmen of you and your adherents; pyramids are not to be levelled by paragraphical small shot; I shall therefore expatiate no more upon this head, nor weaken my argument by the introduction of metaphor, otherwise I might dilate upon the enormities now practising at Paris; but catachrêsis is a figure in rhetoric to which you have so long been accustomed, and for which you have so long been distinguished, that to dispute it with you, would in me be madness.

I am, Sir, &c.



## LETTER II.

**HAVING** thus far attempted to vindicate the conduct of the Assembly in suspending the King, whether considered as an act of expediency or an act of justice, and I believe there is not one political writer, of eminence, that would censure their conduct, since it is on all sides agreed, that a king constituted by the people to guard and to defend the state, the moment he ceases to exercise his functions as a king, or if he exercises those functions amiss; but more emphatically, if he endeavours to warp or change that

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constitution which he has sworn to defend and maintain, that moment he ceases to be king, that moment his subjects are absolved from their allegiance, an allegiance not personal, not absolute, but conditional—the conditions are broken, and the sovereign power, I mean the national convention, must decide whether this suspension shall not terminate in deposition—whether they will elect another king or whether France shall be governed as a republic, such is the situation, such the predicament of the French nation, now described to be agitated by such violent convulsions—yet even supposing them to be as violent as individuals wish to insinuate, I cannot think but that the advantages will overpay the purchase. I know that danger always attends the cradle of liberty; but from this nettle danger we pluck the roses of safety. Never

ver in the history of the world have great advantages been gained without some dangers; but these dangers continue not for ever; soon shall the balmy breeze succeed those noxious vapours, the remains of a contaminated courtly atmosphere, which, perhaps, in the political as well as natural world are dispersed by salutary storms: this strife of elements will soon subside; discord shall give place to order, and a new political Jerusalem will rise from the ruins of ill founded empires. But let us examine into the conduct of the Jacobins who are censured as the causers of these disturbances, let us see with what justice they are condemned, with what propriety the national character is aspersed. If his most Christian Majesty, by his conduct, has roused the indignation, the resentment of the people, are the Jacobins to be blamed?

If there were some tumultuous proceedings, some riotous assemblies, are the transactions of a single day, the conduct of a few individuals to be called the crimes of a nation? is there no discrimination, no allowance to be made for the conflicting violence of party? Perhaps, Sir, many of those sanguinary laws which now disgrace our code, are in some degree extenuated; nay, have by yourself been allowed justifiable only in the turbulence of the times, and receiving their sanction merely from the spur of the occasion they were intended merely as temporary curbs, but they yet stand the manacles of civil and religious liberty. We have been told in the newspapers, some of which, like you, appear to be fed with chimeras, we have heard, I say, Sir, many tragical accounts about cutting off heads and bearing them through the streets upon pikes;

I have



I have enquired into this, and am credibly informed that most of the human trophies are composed of the same materials as those soldiers who defended the wooden redoubt at Bagshot, but were at last blown into the air, these straw representatives produced much stage effect, and may possibly be more generally useful than mankind have yet discovered; but admitting some of these barbarities had in the violence of mis-directed enthusiasm taken place, admitting that some real heads had been carried in triumph on pikes; I believe, Sir, we can recollect a time when the principal gate of one of the greatest, the most civilized, the most humane cities of Europe was ornamented in a similar manner, we needed not to have travelled into the interior of Africa where the palace of the monarch is paved with the skulls of his enemies, our polished  
 nation

nation is diametrically the reverse, we have seen that gloomy edifice, called Temple Bar, adorned with a capital of human skulls, properly embalmed and stuck upon pikes; these monuments however, of English humanity are at length removed. I know very well that the delinquency of our neighbours is no extenuation of our own crimes, but I cannot help thinking that those who are most guilty should not throw the first stone. I know, Sir, your talent for animated descriptions sometimes lead you into embellishment, your account of the *finest palace in the world*, that residence of your *celestial vision*, *strewed with mangled carcases*, &c. &c. sufficiently proves your descriptive powers where small objects are to be heightened, and fanciful description is to precede sober fact.—Proceed with your vivid blazonry and colour

colour the transactions of the 10th, some few were killed on that occasion, which when viewed through your multiplying show glass will appear 10,000, tinged too, as is the case with most objects when too strongly magnified, with all the varying hues of the rainbow; I will admit, Sir, that some were killed on that occasion, yet can I not admit the conclusion that these assassinations were the acts of the majority of the French nation, who I believe were not present; because riots and murders happened in the year 1780, shall we say that the English nation is cruel, disorderly and sanguine; because a deluded rabble lately, intoxicated with superstitious prejudices, committed depredations that will stain the annals of the present reign, and persecuted the divine and the philosopher whose great discoveries in universal science, and

purity

purity of moral character should have rendered him respected by all men of science by all men of virtue, and protected him from the violence of a ferocious deluded rabble, who with torches in their hands and the gospel in their mouths, burnt, pillaged, and destroyed in support of Church and King; shall we say that the English nation is barbarous, disorderly, and cruel. If the arm of government was more conspicuous in protecting brothels than the chapels of Dissenters, surely, Sir, it is no argument that stews are encouraged by government and places of worship proscribed; we know, Sir, that riots, corruption, intemperance, and murder too often disgrace those meetings where the people, like foolish Esau sell their birth-right for a mess of pottage, but God forbid that intelligent foreigners should censure eight millions of Englishmen



men for the disorderly proceedings of twenty or thirty thousand electors. But it is said, that the disorders in France are occasioned by her constitution, when the fact is that tumults were occasioned by the violation of that constitution; these disorders happened subsequent to its establishment, and therefore say these able logicians, the constitution was the primary cause of these disorders. Because assassinations, tortures, and persecutions attended the propagation of Christianity, will Mr. BURKE, or his adherents, declare that these were occasioned by that holy religion, or will they thence deduce any arguments against the truth and purity of its doctrines; if the world was no more prepared for the reception of these divine precepts than Mr. BURKE asserts the French were, for what he terms their Utopian, their new fangled constitution,

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that

that constitution can no more be censured for the abuse of it than Christianity. If numbers are doomed by the laws of their country to suffer for crimes committed against those laws, surely those objects of punishment cannot be brought forward as instances of general depravity; neither can the guilty complain of the severity of the law which condemns them. It is charity to guard an idiot who cannot take care of himself but might be made a mischievous tool in the hands of the designing; it is an act of duty to bind down a madman to prevent his doing an injury. In the conduct of the Assembly justice and mercy are so blended, that we scarce know how to draw the line between them. The Royal Family of France are safe if the ill timed interference of brother kings should not endanger them by too much zeal; if they  
really

really knew how to appreciate the honor and dignity of crowns, they would keep in the back ground, since all thinking men consider that the greatest honour of the diadem is the love of the subject, its highest dignity the prosperity of the people.

With respect to the continuance of the King's confinement, which many compassionate people think unjust, that will be decided by the National Convention; and though we have too many instances in history of wars being raised to protect and reinstate deposed sovereigns; altho' we have severe laws against that wandering Prince, *foi disant* Charles the Third, yet as the efforts of the Pretender have always been crushed by those who supported the Sovereign they had elected, and as the Nation of France is a great Nation, I trust they will give a great ex-

ample. Contrary to the general melancholy instances, that the prison of monarchs generally leads to their grave, probably they will liberate their prisoner, they will allow him to go where he pleases, and retire upon an adequate pension. It is to be hoped they will do this; but whether they will confine him within the kingdom, or whether they will permit him and his family to reside where they chuse, are points that must hereafter be decided by the deliberative wisdom of the National Convention.

I know there are many who sympathize with this unfortunate King, under his confinement, and who vent their execrations against those who have suspended him; but it is easy to know from what quarter these execrations proceed; those who breathe the atmosphere of a Court are apt to consider the people as  
the



the dust upon the balance ; it is easy to trace the cause of their compassion : humane creatures, a single family excites their sensibility, and they would wish to see twenty million of people sacrificed to their liberation ; but thanks to the enlightening dawn of reason, people begin to doubt those absurd doctrines of Refugees and Parasites, who, wishing to pay their court to Kings, endeavoured to strip the People of their rights, and degrade them to a herd under the dominion of a shepherd. Writers who drew inferences from former abuses, and attempted to establish the right by the fact, certainly the most successful mode of supporting despotism ; but people now begin to doubt their doctrines, and they think that the few were rather intended for the service of the many, than that the many were born to be slaves to the few. But many opponents, conscious that rea-  
son

son is against them, when beaten from every post of argument, rally like the emigrant Priuces round the standard of power——every thing is to be atchieved by the confederate armies——the Duke of Brunswick and the King of Prussia in full march to Paris, debating at which quarter of the Champ de Mars they shall make their triumphal entry, and imitating the clemency of the heroine of the North, push a constitution down the throats of the French with the point of their bayonets ; this happy end accomplished, they mean to possess themselves of some part of the territories of France, for their trouble in adjusting their affairs. The poor undisciplined French can never withstand, say they, the combined efforts of veteran and disciplined troops, they must fly before them like chaff before the wind—are you, Sir, of the number that think thus :

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When reason hath excelled, shall force render supreme above their equals? No, Sir, you will not assert it; you who have so frequently divided yourself and gone to buffets with your own political opinions, you who once stood forward the friend of Freedom, the champion of American Independence, soaring upon balloons of sublimity, yet now ungratefully spurning away the cradle of your political eminence, and pronouncing panegyrics upon Lettres de Cachet, dungeons, bastilles, tortures, and racks, and all that never ending variety of oppression, too long endured from a filching Clergy, a rapacious excise, a devouring military, and a profligate, barbarous, mercenary and intrigutng Court: even you, Sir, I say, in the zenith of political inconsistency, will certainly admit that voices should always be made subservient to wisdom.

I shall



I shall now proceed to enquire what reliance may be placed on the Confederate Armies, and what success will eventually crown their efforts ; in the mean time, Sir, I again lament my deficiency in those rhetorical touches which have so long distinguished you, those meteors of the moment which dazzle and mislead——possessed I these I should expatiate largely upon the number and discipline of the Confederate Armies, their ardor to engage, the experience of their leaders, the dismantled state of the Frontier towns, and the plenty of forage ; the excellence of the roads, a fine flat open country, nothing to obstruct the march of the troops, the favourable season, reduction of Longwy and Thionville, &c. the deranged state of the French finances, the great resources of the Austrians and Prussians reinforced with forty thousand bears from the dominions



minions of Catharine the Great, with a King and an Emperor at the head of the troops.—Really, Sir, 'tis a great pity we could not find another crowned head mad enough to join this *concert* of Sovereigns and complete the *trio*; then, indeed, we might tremble for the fate of France, these diadem'd Knights Errant must prove irresistible, they would instantly march, attack the castle, kill the giant, and deliver the prisoners.

I am, Sir, &c.

## LETTER III.

THE conduct of the Assembly vindicated, I now proceed to enquire whether that enthusiastic ardor which the French have so nobly manifested, in the outset of their political career, will forsake them in the hour of peril.

I know that Slaves whose manners were formed under the luxury and dissipation of a Court, cannot so suddenly purge off those baser dregs with which they have so long been contaminated; a national character cannot be changed in a moment; but Freedom rears her heroes  
in

in the school of adversity, and defeat may teach them experience. The Carthaginians improved the Romans in the art of war, and yielded to their superior prowess—and not to go beyond the present century, we have seen the Russians directed the road to victory by their Swedish vanquishers; and what is a yet more recent, a more illustrious example, we have seen the Legions of Freedom erecting her victorious standard in the plains of America; we should therefore hope that in the present fermentation these corrupt particles will fly off and mingle with the congenial atmosphere of profligate Courts, and leave the purer mass with sufficient consistency to be moulded by the plastic hand of genuine liberty.

Let us now examine the dangers with which France is threatened, and from the complexion of affairs, as far as con-

jecture may be hazarded, from an examination into the state of the constitutional vessel, the waves which toss, and the storms which threaten, let us examine how she is furnished to sustain the flock, whether she will reach the destined port and ride safe at anchor, where the tempest shall howl in vain; for battered as she appears at present, and ready to be dashed to pieces, by the enemies of human nature, there is a cherub sitting aloft that sees their purposes, and will, we hope, provide for her safety.

A Sovereign Confederacy is formed against France, should she establish her liberty; they tremble lest it should spread like a contagion; their crowns, their revenues, their armies, the secret intrigues of their cabinets, all would be swept away in this mighty torrent; self interest has blended itself with their humanity, and  
they



they less feel for the King of the French, than they tremble for themselves. But let their armies ravage a few towns on the frontiers; let these magnanimous heroes hang up the peasants, who, in defence of their houses, or to protect their wives and daughters from brutal violation, fire out of their windows upon those who came to molest them\*. I believe the Confederate Generals are too wise to penetrate far into the country; at least when they enter, desertions will be frequent; soldiers who are paid for fighting, allured by a prospect of better pay, by a fertile soil where nature has been profuse, tempted by a milder climate, attracted by more equal laws, the prospect

\* The Duke of Brunswick ordered two peasants to be executed for firing upon the soldiers from their windows: perhaps the Assembly will retaliate on the two first Austrian officers who may fall under their power.

of promotion through the avenues of merit—I say, Sir, that men allured by such prospects, may perhaps be inclined to change a slavish subjection, where they are degraded to mere machines, for an independence, where they will be considered as men;—some of them begin to think, and communicate their sentiments probably to their comrades; they naturally enquire, for what purpose have we left our wives and families, our peaceful habitations; what advantage shall we gain; why do we fight a people who would receive us with open arms;—if these men against whom we fight, should invade our territories and attempt to regulate our domestic concerns, what should we think of them; for what purpose, for what persons do we spill our blood; for the service of our country? no; for our own advantage? no; for the advantage of the French nation? no; for what do

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we fight? to establish despotism—for a Royal Family; for an emigrant and insolent Aristocracy: we are fighting to enslave those who are endeavouring to make us free. Is our success certain? by no means; we are not fighting for our own advantage, we are fighting against ourselves. — Such, Sir, may possibly be the thoughts, at least of some of the soldiers in the confederate armies; these may increase as they advance into the country; they may then begin to speak those thoughts—there is, Sir, a magic something in the atmosphere of Freedom, which has a strong influence on those that breathe it; it operates with electric rapidity; France was herself animated by its power; her soldiers, serving under the banners of Washington in America, were the conductors; they breathed the air of liberty, imbibed its principles, and transplanted them to their own country.



try. Let monarchs tremble—let Austria look to this—let Prussia—let Catharine—let all who dare to lift the sword against this magnificent and awful cause **BEWARE**—and inly ruminate the danger of their efforts—the brazen bull invented by Phalaris, should instruct them how frequently those who direct engines of destruction against others, are caught in their own springs.

It is probably too late for the Confederate Armies to reach Paris this campaign; in the mean time that National Convention will be assembled, which I consider as the grand central point from whence legislation must commence; it is that sovereign uncontrollable power which in all states must be vested somewhere; from it proceeds all the attributes of Majesty; it can organize, it can modify and dispense what privilege it pleases to its executive



ecutive magistrate, and is the supreme, the sovereign power, whose decrees can only be changed by a power equal to itself—perhaps this Assembly, now taught by experience, will be cautious how far it treats any one individual with too much power or too much revenue—and will wisely reserve to itself the right of making war; a right which unhappily for the human race, is often too fatally abused. — The Austrian and Prussian *nations* are not hostile to France; it is the Austrian and Prussian *monarchs* who carry the war into her country, to destroy the spirit of freedom; and I am of opinion that in no instance ought the prerogative of making war to be vested in one individual. Montesquieu has asserted that legislative Assemblies ought to be composed of many, for the advantages of deliberation; and surely an act which requires the most mature deliberation

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ought never to be entrusted to the caprice of one individual; the people who pay the expences, the people who are eventually injured, ought in all cases to judge of the expediency of going to war; which, when by their representatives judged necessary, let the executive magistrate conduct the mode of operation in what manner he thinks proper. If in this instance the European powers had imitated the conduct of America, France would not now have been invaded—and Europe might perhaps attain the commercial advantages of that wise republic.

I enter here into no dispute upon the abstract question, whether a republic is intrinsically better than a monarchy, I only say that Greece and Rome were republics, and I have somewhere read it remarked, that the best possible form of government is to be found in a republic, or  
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confederated common - wealths :—they unite all the virtue of a republic with the force of a monarchy. Although, Sir, I approve of monarchy properly modified, I nevertheless think that we have less occasion for that force now than we had formerly. Every nation has internally, perhaps, sufficient strength to repel an invasion, and the business of monarchy is to make conquests; but men are now so enlightened that they revolt at the idea of carrying fire and sword into their neighbours country, merely because they have the power to do so. Mutual interest is the grand cement of nations as well as individuals; connected by commercial interests they unite for mutual accommodation, and commerce flourishes in those countries where there is most freedom: It is not here the question whether a republic is better than a monarchy: neither



is it the question whether a republic would be better for France ; the question simply is, whether the French People chuse to be governed as a republic—if they do—no Nation has any business to interfere in any mode whatever directly or indirectly with internal political regulations. Now, Sir, from the present state of opinions in France, the majority of the nation seems against the appointment of another king, and when the sense of that nation is properly collected, as far as an individual may hazard conjectures, France will assume the form of a republic: the king will receive an annual pension as a private gentleman, and the armies collected in his behalf will be disconcerted ; I repeat, Sir, that order will soon return—France will repair her losses and will be looked upon with an eye of admiration and respect by surrounding nations, which sooner or later will follow her example, and with  
more



more or less local modification imitate her laws. We have recently experienced the effects of freedom, it began on the other side of the Atlantic—the flame blazed forth in France, and however it may have been for a time smothered in Poland, it will break forth with double energy; it is a sun shining more and more until the perfect day; even here will its beams be felt, and the remotest corners of the earth shall feel its influence.

We are informed of the capture of Longwy; probably may hear of the reduction of Verdun or Thionville; they may possibly set down before Metz; nay, even supposing, what appears to me almost impossible, should the confederate armies even march to Paris, and power give law to the French, they will not endure it long, the smothered flame will burst with greater explosion. France will  
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be free, she will form her own constitution, not a constitution dictated at the point of the bayonet, but a constitution where at all events she must be a gainer. Governors appointed by force, must be maintained by force, men who think, yield only to the empire of reason, she is the great sovereign, and that government alone is firm which combines power and wisdom; but wisdom requires little support from power, and a good government is firm because it is neither the wish nor the interest of the people to oppose it.

Such is the form of government which the French are endeavouring to establish, their cause is a tower of strength not often unsuccessful, 'tis hoped that cause will animate their bosoms, and unite their hearts, will give them the scorn of danger, the contempt of death. Such was  
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the cause which animated those heroes of Greece and Rome to whose illustrious achievements we now look up with admiration. So far are confederate armies from injuring that cause, that to support it, they have only to oppose it—I speak not paradoxically—you, Sir, are well versed in the Grecian and Roman histories, permit me to give you examples in both these, to prove how rapidly one revolution succeeds another, and that to arm against freedom is eventually to fight under its banners; but there are so many instances which I could cite to prove my assertion, that I scarcely know which to select. I shall content myself, however, with one from the Greek and another from the Roman history, which appear to me to be strikingly apposite to the affairs of the Continent where a general spirit of freedom is gone abroad amongst the nations, overturning the reigns of Des-

potism



potism and establishing government upon its proper basis.

When Harmodius and Aristogiton rescued Athenian liberty from the usurping grasp of Hipparchus the son of Pisistratus, his emigrant brother Hippias threw himself into the arms of Darius. War ensued between the Persians and Greeks, and from this æra may we date, and to this very circumstance attribute, the glory of Athens. Had not Darius armed his myriads against this little common-wealth, we should not have seen the developement of those latent principles which have made it the admiration of posterity. Had not Darius armed his myriads against the little battallions of Miltiades, we should not have seen those prodigies of valour in the plains of Marathon, had not Xerxes led his myriads over the Hellespont, the straits of Thermopylæ had  
never



never been immortalized by the glory of Leonidas; permit me here to remark how in ancient as well as modern history the spark of political regeneration kindled in one state breaks out in another. Nearly about the period of the Athenian revolution commenced the emancipation of Rome by the expulsion of Tarquin; here we admire the patriotisim of a Brutus, and here the Romans disgusted at the perfidy, at the tyranny of an individual—declare that there shall be kings no longer—Tarquin flies to Porsenna who espouses his quarrel—what is the consequence, he establishes the freedom and the glory of Rome, her eagles now begin to soar into the clouds—here we see that noble ardour that enthusiastic love of liberty, which characterized Horatius Cocles—the intrepid spirit of Scævola, which caused the astonishment and despair of Porsenna. So strong is this enthusiasm for liberty,

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that it even animates the female breast, we see the intrepid Clelia at the head of her train of heroines scorning the javelins of the enemy—but why need, I Sir, why need I dwell upon those instances which your knowledge and experience in history and mankind inform you are sufficiently substantial, and might be brought to corroborate my position, if that position required corroboration, that obstacles to liberty, strengthen its principles and promote its expansion. A word or two by way of anticipating objections. I shall be told, perhaps, that the French are neither Greeks nor Romans; and that there is no analogy between the ancients and the moderns. If we return to the history of the French we shall find that their ancestors, the Franks, were always a restless and an enterprising nation, who vanquished the Gauls and obtained a settlement, from which even the Romans,

not

not powerful enough to dislodge them, were compelled to enter into negociation and grant by treaty what they could not recover by arms. To those who tell me that they are degenerated, I shall answer that man is the creature of education and habit. That the variety of moral agency is occasioned by principles variously acting upon different minds, the national character is fashioned by the laws, and where there are wise laws, acting with unremitted energy, there will be a wise nation: from these principles I infer, that the French will be regenerated, all defects will gradually vanish, the soil naturally fertile, though not sufficiently cultivated, in consequence of that precarious state of property incident to despotic governments, will soon be abundantly rich, in proportion as that property becomes more permanent. Nature has been profuse to France, her soil, her climate, her rivers,

her canals, all contribute to make her abundantly magnificent; nay so strongly were these in her favour that even an arbitrary government, the profligacy of the court, the precarious right of individuals to their property, could not exhaust her. If she thus flourished in the midst of oppression, what will she be when she is free? New laws will produce new manners. The former government of France was the worst that could possibly exist, it must therefore be changed for the better, and possibly the present convulsions may accelerate order—perhaps the hostile armies may be the means of compelling the French to unite all their counsels and collect all their might; and even amidst the present chaos, all discordant conflicting particles finding a centre of attraction, the French may astonish the world by some glorious exertion; perhaps too, some

secret



secret wheel in the political mechanism may cease to operate, or may operate in their favour, and may attract the attention of those who are oppressing others to protect and to secure themselves.

But I hear it whispered that the fleet of Great Britain is to act against the French. I cannot believe this. I hope my countrymen are too wise, too humane, too generous. Is it with an intent to exasperate and make every English breast boiling with indignation at the cruelties now practised, that these accounts are so exaggerated? Is it to rouse us to war?—already, Sir, I see it remarked in one of the prints, that this would be a favourable moment to punish that perfidy which France has constantly exhibited against us, and to take possession of their colonies in the East and West Indies, which this writer says might be so easily effected. I shall

shall not expose the fallacy of this. The advice itself is a receipt in full for the character of the head and heart of the writer. I know it has been too much the business of monarchs to inculcate prejudice amongst the people whom they govern—it makes them more ready to execute the purposes of ambition—under an arbitrary government, slaves are bound to obey their tyrants—those who in the intrigues of their courts combined the fox's cunning with the lion's force; but it was not the French *nation* that was perfidious to England; it is not the *French nation* which is guilty of these cruelties; it was the court of LOUIS XVI. it was that foolish, that perfidious court which refused ——— the pen drops from my hand and every nerve vibrates with horror—the tear of humanity—the fire of execration—I pause a few moments ——— lest indignation rushing like a torrent

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rent through every vein should bear away reason—but I will not afflict the sensibility of my reader—the convulsive pang—the piercing groan—the cracking eye-string—the conflicting struggles of supplication and despair——O France! when the historian shall describe this period of thy history—if he is a friend to freedom and its principles how will he be agitated, how will he pass over this recent massacre—upon this thy enemies, the friends of tyranny will insist—the poet and the orator will form the dreadful picture—the philosopher only will weep—and lament, and execrate the cause of all this horror—but who shall attempt to extenuate this conduct—what could he advance were he possessed of the rhetoric of a BURKE, or the eloquence of a SHERIDAN! In vain will he enumerate the millions sacrificed in war to the ambition of one individual; the bloody contests be-

tween

tween York and Lancaster—the burning of so many thousand Heretics—the persecution of the Catholics—the millions of Hugonots sacrificed in that unhappy country—the gloomy horrors of the Bastille—in vain will he lament the bad consequences of ill timed zeal—the imprudence of resisting a mighty torrent that must bear down all before it—fruitlessly will he assert—if the confederate armies had not entered France; if LOUIS had sanctioned the decree to transport these unhappy men their lives would have been saved; all this, nay more, will be urged without effect; the heart is too much interested, the events are too recent, too shocking. I wish to pass over this melancholy subject, sincerely hoping, nay, firmly believing, that the accounts are violently exaggerated.

With respect to our interference against  
France,



France, it would be unnecessary and inconsistent; every reasonable man wishes to see those prejudices between nations, which courts have inculcated for their own purposes, finally abolished. The French were formerly despised for being Slaves; they are now censured for licentiousness; I hope this will subside into liberty — the French court was always perfidious to this country, and it now meets its punishment. But the French nation should not be censured for the perfidy of their court, while they were enslaved by that court.

But admitting, Sir, that this country were to arm and join the confederacy, I cannot think but that it would be a very dangerous, nay, a very unjustifiable measure. I do not think that any power whatever can have a right to enter a neighbour's territory and settle disputes

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between the people and their governors, any more than it would be justifiable for any individual to break open his neighbour's house and interfere in his domestic regulations. Kings who have been deposed are seldom reinstated, except by the unanimous voice of the nation, which is not to be found at the point of the bayonet; besides the precedent of suffering foreign powers to have any influence has always been dangerous, particularly in this country. The Saxons, induced by the treachery of Vertgem, soon made themselves masters of Britain.

If we turn to the page of our history, and reflect upon the heavy exactions of the Church of Rome, which were paid under the denomination of Romescot, the disgraceful offering of a king at the shrine of superstition—that exaction by the king, under the name of Danegelt,  
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in those ages of oppression, when historians inform us, that every house had its lurdane, who regulated the family, made free with the good man's wife or daughter, and committed every violation of the most sacred principles with impunity. From this retrospect and innumerable instances of a similar nature, let me ask rational Englishmen, who feel the influence of freedom, should the prerogatives, with haughty and gigantic stride, again presume to trample on our sacred rights---should ship-money again be demanded, or the right of taxation without the intervention of parliament insisted upon, and the people collected in a body---should we not remonstrate boldly against the infringements of those rights which our ancestors purchased with their blood---it is but stigmatizing remonstrance with the name of rebellion; and upon application to the confederacy



for the honor and dignity of crowns--- Austrians, Russians, and Prussians, may assemble in this country, dismember our territories, and subject us again to the sword of tyrannic oppression.

Surely, Sir, if the balance of power is not a mere non-entity, we should look with a jealous eye upon this invasion, and prevent those encroachments, and that partition of the French territories which is now in agitation---but strange things come to pass in our days.---Our ancestors marched forth to wrest the Holy Land from the grasp of the Infidels.---Their descendants, to preserve the balance of power, quarter the Cross with the Crescent. Imperious Russia presumes to give laws to a brave people, who justly deserve their freedom. Poland is nearer to this country than Turkey,---Humanity and duty united, would have led us to protect

protect them; and to curb the ambition of an imperious woman, who possesses too much power, and wants not the inclination to injure. But every thing was mis-timed:---had that armament, intended for the protection of the Turks, been devoted to the assistance of Poland, the nation would not complain of expences incurred to assist so brave a people, and to clip the wings of female ambition----but the balance of power is rendered subservient to ministerial occasions.-----Should a part of their territories be taken from the French, Great Britain will not interfere. Should any salutary regulations be offered, for a more equal representation of the people, we shall be referred to the convulsions of France. I think, however, that this confederacy against liberty, will eventually be humbled at her feet.---But let the confederate armies even be in possession of the capital ;  
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supposing that the French should not surround them as Washington did Lord Cornwallis in America.---There are many ways into France, but perhaps they will find very few to lead them out.---Should they for a time reinstate Louis, and restore the nobility, I fear their ill-timed zeal would make more victims---the mind can only be convinced by reason. The confederates may even prevent by force what the French would have agreed to, had they not been opposed.—The bayonet may wound the body, but the mind, ardent for freedom, smiles at the paltry efforts of kings and armies; and having sworn to be free, will certainly attain her end.

I cannot but think from the many changes which have taken place both in property and principles, that it will be more expedient, nay, more advantageous  
to



to the French nation to proceed; it is more the wish of the people of France, it is more their interest to support than to oppose the revolution. — Advancing with this principle, that none should have too much, and that every one should have something. They have by dividing property, increased population; by dividing property, they have multiplied the numbers who possess it, and who are to defend that property which they think they have fairly acquired. The Assembly, by resuming what ignorance and credulity had lent to superstition, converted the estates of the ecclesiastics to the best purposes; and by allowing a competent stipend to the ecclesiastics, by abstracting their attention hitherto too much chained to temporal concerns, they have given them an opportunity of cultivating those moral duties which form the happiness of

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mankind ; and what is much more, setting the example.

But as I advance, so many obstacles against settling the constitution by the intervention of foreign powers crowd upon my mind, that I should spin out these letters beyond their destined limits, and I fear their prolixity has already pall'd my readers, were I to attempt to enumerate them. The confederate armies march to *reinstate* the French king ; to restore the princes ; in a word, to re-establish despotism.—Should they dictate to the French nation a constitution, perhaps it would be observed, as long as an army could be kept always ready to quell insurrections ; the constitution established by force, would exist as long as that force would be capable of maintaining it ; this is a principle——the spark would be stifled for a short time, but it would break  
out

out in assassinations, in robberies, in murders,———nay, it might terminate in sweeping away all the kings of the earth.——The Manifesto, conscious of the crimes committed by Lewis, which it has not the effrontery to justify---extenuates his conduct by alledging, that he was not free when he swore, and consequently that his oath was not binding.——Let us apply this reasoning to the constitution the confederates intend to establish, and the French will have the same plea for throwing off the yoke;---and even admitting the worst that can possibly happen, I still am bold enough to assert, that France will be free.——Already has she manifested a restless spirit, which will be always active. Secret conspiracies and assassinations will be the consequence of this invasion, without which the fermentation would of itself

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have subsided. Her conquerors must be always in arms, the spirit of revolt, untamed reluctance—the progress of slow but sure revenge.---United councils will cement their citizens---will nerve their arms---temper their swords---and purge the land once more of their oppressors——the idol will be dashed again from the pedestal, and the temple of liberty be adorned with the trophies of the vanquished.

Whatever temporary calamities she may experience---whatever storms may threaten and oblige her to bear away before them---she will yet reach the destined port---it is not from a few circumstances that the philosophic politician will form his judgment; his comprehensive mind, looking into the history of the past; possessed of the knowledge of the present,  
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can see the beams of liberty through the sanguine cloud that now obscures her  
 ---these clouds will not last for ever.  
 The abuse of good principles is no argument against them---when, therefore, any salutary measure, such as a more equal representation, or a humane decree to emancipate those who are guilty of having a skin differently coloured from our own, or the abolition of the corporation and test acts, shall be agitated in parliament by men, whose talents and integrity have rendered them worthy of serving their country, when such important subjects are discussed, they will probably be answered by an exaggerated statement of the calamities of France.---  
 Here, Sir, you will again display your abilities as an orator; but you will be answered by the founder logic of the British Demosthenes, that the abuses of  
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a good system in one country, is no argument against its being introduced in another, where the people better understand, and are better prepared to receive its principles.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Yours, &c.

B.

THE END.